

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 109978
ORIGIN AF-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: AF/I:LPSLEZAK

APPROVED BY: AF/I:WHLEWIS

-----114677 291548Z /65

R 290351Z APR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO RUTAGN/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 0000

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ALL EC CAPITALS, GENEVA
FROM BRUSSELS APRIL 27:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRUSSELS 08283

USEEC, ALSO FOR USDEL MTN GENEVA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EEC, EAID, ETRD

SUBJ: LABOR GROUPS PROMOTING "SOCIAL DIMENSION" IN LOME II

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 7699; (B) BRUSSELS 3153; (C) BRUSSELS

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2739; (D) BRUSSELS 2150

1. SUMMARY: THE 40 MILLION-MEMBER EUROPEAN TRADE UNION
CONFEDERATION (ETUC) IS STEPPING UP EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT
A "SOCIAL DIMENSION" IS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TRADE AND
AID AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EC AND 53 AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN,
AND PACIFIC (ACP) COUNTRIES WHICH WILL REPLACE THE PRESENT

LOME CONVENTION WHEN IT EXPIRES IN MARCH 1980. END SUMMARY.

2. ETUC OFFICIALS PRIVATELY TAKE SOME OF THE CREDIT FOR PERSUADING THE EC COMMISSION TO INCLUDE POINTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS IN ITS PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR RENEGOTIATION OF THE LOME CONVENTION (REF B). SINCE THE GUIDELINES ARE STILL BEING CONSIDERED BY THE EC COUNCIL, THE ETUC'S OBJECTIVE IS TO MAKE SURE THAT THE "SOCIAL" POINTS ARE APPROVED, AND ARE SPELLED OUT IN MEANINGFUL LANGUAGE.

3. THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAS APPOINTED A SPECIAL "LOME II" SUBCOMMITTEE TO DRAFT A POLICY STATEMENT COVERING IN DETAIL WHAT THE ETUC HAS IN MIND. THE SUBCOMMITTEE MET ON APRIL 20 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GERMAN DGB, DANISH LO, FRENCH CFTD, BELGIAN CSC, AND THE ITALIAN CGIL-UIL-CISL (ONE PERSON FROM EACH), AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF THE ETUC SECRETARIAT, IN ATTENDANCE.

4. ACCORDING TO AN ETUC SOURCE, THE SUBCOMMITTEE DRAFT WILL DEVELOP THE ETUC'S CASE FOR PROTECTING LABOR STANDARDS, AND WILL LIST THE ILO LABOR CONVENTIONS THAT THE ETUC BELIEVES SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN LOME II. THE USEC LABOR ATTACHE HAS OBTAINED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS TWO INTERNAL ETUC DOCUMENTS WHICH CONTAIN POSITIONS THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAS NOT YET FORMALLY ADOPTED, BUT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONSIDERING.

5. ONE DOCUMENT IS VERY CRITICAL OF EC COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR INVESTMENT GUARANTEES TO EUROPEAN FIRMS DOING BUSINESS IN ACP COUNTRIES (REF D). "AS THEY STAND, THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT," THE PAPER STATES, AND CITES CONDITIONS TO MAKE THEM ACCEPTABLE. THE MOST IMPORTANT CONDITIONS:

--"NORMS OF GOOD CONDUCT FOR HOST COUNTRIES AND INVESTORS" MUST BE ESTABLISHED TO "INCLUDE REFERENCE TO ILO FAIR LABOR STANDARDS....NO INVESTMENT GUARANTEES MUST BE GIVEN IF FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ARE BEING VIOLATED...SOMETHING OF A PRECEDENT FOR SUCH AN APPROACH WAS PROVIDED IN THE EEC CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA; THE SAME CONCEPT, BUT WITH THE NECESSARY MEANS OF SURVEILLANCE AND SANCTION SHOULD BE ADOPTED."

--UNIONS ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL MUST BE ALLOWED TO "PARTICIPATE IN THE DRAWING-UP OF INVESTMENT GUARANTEE

AGREEMENTS."

6. ANOTHER DOCUMENT, TITLED "TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT," ARGUES FOR A "REFORM OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE." IT MAKES THE GENERAL POINT THAT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS MUST NOT PROMOTE LIBERALIZATION OF TRADE "AT THE EXPENSE OF WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES" (I.E., IN BOTH DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES). RATHER, "IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT TRADE IS DIRECTED TO THE IMMEDIATE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE AND IN PARTICULAR TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIES TO CREATE EMPLOYMENT AND TO SATISFY BASIC NEEDS." A KEY SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT SAYS UNIONS OPPOSE TRADE LIBERALIZATION IF:

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(A) TRADE BENEFITS ACCRUE ONLY TO A SMALL SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION, OR THE PROFITS ACCRUE TO LARGE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES;

(B) HUMAN AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS ARE "NOT BEING RESPECTED IN THE PURSUIT OF TRADE POLICIES."

7. SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION IN THE DOCUMENT IS THE "BASIC RIGHT" OF SAFETY AND HEALTH AT THE WORK PLACE. "IT IS UNACCEPTABLE THAT GOODS AND SERVICES ARE PRODUCED AT THE COST OF A WORKER'S LIFE OR HEALTH," THE PAPER SAYS. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS, THEREFORE, SHOULD CONTAIN PROVISIONS TO "MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PROHIBIT THE IMPORTING OF GOODS PRODUCED UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH ENDANGER WORKERS' HEALTH AND LIVES."

8. THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT WAS MEANT PARTLY AS A COMMENTARY ON THE COMMISSION'S EVOLVING IDEAS REGARDING "RECIPROCAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY AND ITS OTHER POLICIES," TO QUOTE THE COMMISSION'S OWN JARGON (REF A). ALONG THESE LINES, THE PAPER URGES EC GOVERNMENTS "TO PURSUE ADJUSTMENT POLICIES: CHANGES IN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES MUST NOT BE LEFT TO THE FREE PLAY OF MARKET FORCES, SINCE IN SUCH CASES, THE HARDSHIP SUFFERED BY THE WORKERS IN THE DISPLACED INDUSTRIES CAN BE SEVERE, WHATEVER THE OVERALL NATIONAL GAINS." (TEXT OF THE TWO DOCUMENTS BEING POUCHED TO EUR/RPE:MCLEAN.)

9. ON APRIL 21, THE DAY AFTER THE MEETING OF THE ETUC SUBCOMMITTEE, ITS MEMBERS JOINED IN LARGER MEETING ON LOME II, ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL) AND INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU) SECRETARIATS AND BY 13 LABOR LEADERS FROM ACP COUNTRIES.

10. ORIGINALLY, THE APRIL 21 SESSION WAS TO HAVE BEEN UNDER THE JOINT AUSPICES OF THE ETUC, ICFTU, WCL, AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY (OATUU), BUT THE OATUU AS SUCH DROPPED OUT BECAUSE OF SCHEDULE CONFLICTS OF ITS GENERAL SECRETARY, DENIS AKUMU. AKUMU, BUSY WITH MEETINGS IN TUNIS AND PRAGUE, FIRST TRIED TO GET THE BRUSSELS SESSION POSTPONED, AND FAILING THAT, THEN TRIED TO DISCOURAGE ATTENDANCE, ACCORDING TO AN ICFTU SOURCE. STILL, NINE OF THE 14 AFRICANS ORIGINALLY REGISTERED DID ATTEND. (LIST OF REGISTRANTS AND PARTICIPANTS BEING POUCHED TO AF/I: SLEZAK).

11. BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF AKUMU AND OTHERS, THE MEETING DID NOT ADOPT A POLICY RESOLUTION BUT APPROVED A SHORT PRESS RELEASE SUMMARIZING THE VIEWS OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND REFLECTING IN PART POINTS IN DOCUMENTS CITED ABOVE, WHICH THE PARTICIPANTS USED AS DISCUSSION PAPERS. THE REVISED LOME CONVENTION, SAID THE RELEASE, MUST:

--"MAKE REFERENCE TO ILO LABOR STANDARDS AS WELL AS OTHER BASIC RIGHTS."

--"ENTAIL THE PURSUIT NOT ONLY OF ECONOMIC BUT ALSO OF SOCIAL POLICIES AIMED AT CREATING EMPLOYMENT AND SATISFYING BASIC NEEDS."

--PERMIT TRADE UNIONS "TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION."

12. IN ADDITION, THE RELEASE SAID THAT "TRADE UNIONS EXPECT A SUBSTANTIAL INFLUENCE IN THE PREPARATION AND NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE LOME CONVENTION," AND ANNOUNCED THAT THERE NOW EXISTS FOR THIS PURPOSE AN AD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOC JOINT ETUC-ICFTU-WCL-OATUU COMMITTEE. (ITS MEMBERS, ACCORDING TO AN ETUC SOURCE, ARE SVEN-ERIK STERNER, ETUC DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY; ENZO FRISO, SENIOR ICFTU STAFFER; GERARD FONTENEAU, WCL ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY; AND AKUMU OF THE OATUU.)

13. NOTABLY ABSENT FROM THE PRESS RELEASE WAS ANY REFER-

ENCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS AS SUCH. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE
MORE GENERAL LANGUAGE ON RIGHTS WAS APPROVED IN DEFERENCE
TO THE VIEWS OF AN ACP PARTICIPANT, L. GOODLEIGH OF THE
NATIONAL WORKERS UNION OF JAMAICA, WHO REPORTEDLY ARGUED
AGAINST ANY COMMENT ON "POLITICAL RIGHTS." HINTON
UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LOBBYING, LABOR UNIONS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS, TRADE AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE109978
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/I:LPSLEZAK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780184-0147
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978041/aaaaaanp.tel
Line Count: 230
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3139b2a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BRUSSELS 7699, 78 BRUSSELS 3153
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2812863
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR GROUPS PROMOTING "SOCIAL DIMENSION" IN LOME II
TAGS: ELAB, EAID, ETRD, XG, XA, XP, XL, EEC, ETUC
To: ACCRA ABIDJAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3139b2a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014